

May Day 2022: Young people must turn to the working class and the fight for socialism!

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This is the report delivered by Gregor Link to the 2022 International May Day Online Rally held on May 1. Link is a leading member in Germany of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality, the youth movement of the International Committee of the Fourth International and its affiliated Socialist Equality Parties. To view all speeches, visit wsws.org/mayday.

Before the eyes of millions and billions of young people around the world, capitalism has been exposed for what it is: A hostile and bankrupt, historically obsolete system that serves only to enrich a tiny capitalist class in every country, even as the lives of hundreds of millions are threatened by a deadly virus and the specter of nuclear war.

What has been the experience of us young workers throughout the world? NATO's proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, which is rapidly raising the threat of World War III, is the latest in a period of more than 30 years of unending war. The campaign of US imperialism to offset its economic decline has destroyed entire societies. Young people of entire world regions—such as the Middle East and large parts of Africa—have known nothing but imperialist war and murderous conflict.

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally affected youth in every single country. Millions have lost parents, grandparents and co-workers. The decision of the world's governments to let the virus rip through society has produced this pandemic. To maintain the enrichment of the capitalist oligarchs, they consciously refused to eliminate the virus and end the pandemic.

Almost two decades of perpetual economic crisis have left hundreds of millions of youth unemployed, while housing prices and soaring inflation make it all

but impossible to raise a family. The majority of working class youth are being exploited by the so-called gig economy and hardly anybody gets a job that provides a secure future.

Driven by these irreconcilable class interests, governments all over the world viciously attack democratic and social rights that have been won by previous generations of workers. Trying to suppress opposition and foment national division, the ruling classes resort to censorship, propaganda and far-right violence. Along with the threat of nuclear world war, the fascist danger has never been greater.

But ours is a generation grown up to be intimately interconnected with each other. This global interconnectivity has undermined the efforts of the ruling class to sow division among working-class youth—and it has profoundly revolutionary implications. As we enter into the monumental class battles that lie ahead, our ability to communicate and coordinate these struggles on a global scale will prove to be a decisive factor.

It has become clear that capitalism has nothing to offer to youth but poverty, sickness, climate change and world war.

More than ever before, this year's May Day raises the necessity to abolish this system and replace it with socialism on a world scale. A global society must be built that places lives before profit and uses all of society's resources to serve the social needs of the world working class and all of humanity.

I appeal to all of you to take part in this struggle. Turn to the working class! The fight against capitalism is not a generational issue, nor is it a question of individual identity. The working class consists of all ethnicities, genders and orientations and is objectively unified by the same class interests.

Build the International Youth and Students for Social Equality, which fights to connect young people to the historical experiences of the working class. Study the lessons of history and the perspectives of the ICFI. Make this extraordinary May Day a milestone in your development as a Marxist and Trotskyist and a revolutionary fighter for socialism.



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